United Nations

Report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council

General Assembly
Official Records • Forty-eighth Session
Supplement No.47 (A/48/47)

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[Original: English]

[2 September 1994]

Report on the progress of the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council

1. The present report is prepared and submitted in pursuance of resolution 48/26 of 3 December 1993, by which the General Assembly decided to establish an Open-ended Working Group to consider all aspects of the question of increase in the membership of the Security Council, and other matters related to the Security Council. The General Assembly also requested the Open-ended Working Group to submit a report on the progress of its work to the Assembly before the end of its forty-eighth session.

2. The Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council held 22 meetings from 19 January to 2 September 1994. The President of the General Assembly, Mr. S. R. Insanally, served as Chairman of the Working Group.

3. At its 2nd meeting, on 16 February 1994, the Open-ended Working Group appointed Mr. Wilhelm Breitenstein (Finland) and Mr. Chew Tai Soo (Singapore) as Vice-Chairmen of the Working Group. At the same meeting, the Open-ended Working Group requested the Secretariat to prepare a background paper on the views expressed by Member States and regional groups, as well as by regional organizations or arrangements, in their written replies in response to General Assembly resolution 47/62 (A/48/264 and Add.1 and 2, Add.2/Corr.1 and Add.3-8). It was also to cover the views expressed during the general debate at the forty-eighth session of the Assembly, as well as the subsequent consideration of agenda items 10, 11 and 33. The background paper was issued on 28 February 1994 for the internal use of the Open-ended Working Group.

4. At its 3rd meeting, on 1 March 1994, the Open-ended Working Group discussed its organization of work and agreed on the programme of work listing matters for discussion.

5. At its 3rd to 17th meetings, from 1 March to 27 May 1994, the Open-ended Working Group held the first round of substantive discussions on six clusters of topics, namely, (a) Equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council; (b) Other matters related to the Security Council; (c) Effective and efficient functioning of the Security Council; (d) Decision-making in accordance with the provisions of the Charter; (e) Elections and terms of office; and (f) Modalities for bringing changes into effect and consideration of related Charter amendments.

6. At the end of the first round of discussions and after informal consultations conducted by the Bureau of the Open-ended Working Group, the Secretariat was asked to prepare a second background paper on the views expressed by Member States during the first round of discussions. The paper was issued on 27 May 1994. It was also thought to be useful for the President of the General Assembly to prepare a non-paper, reflecting his personal views, in an attempt to facilitate a systematic and constructive exchange in the second round of discussions. The non-paper by the President was issued on 20 May 1994. Both papers were distributed for the internal use of the Open-ended Working Group.

7. At its 18th to 21st meetings, from 8 to 29 June 1994, the Open-ended Working Group began the second round of discussions. The debate focused alternately on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council, as well as on other matters related to the Security Council.

8. The discussion on equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council addressed, inter alia, the question of size and composition of the possible increase in the Council membership. Although the debate was substantive and constructive, clarifying the positions of Member States, no conclusions were drawn. While there was a convergence of views that the membership of the Security Council should be enlarged, there was also agreement that the scope and nature of such enlargement require further discussion. On other matters related to the Security Council, it was noted that the Council had initiated a number of steps to enhance its working methods and procedures. There were also views expressed on possible further measures the Council may be invited to take in this regard.

9. The Open-ended Working Group, at its 22nd meeting, held on 2 September 1994, concluded its discussion for the current session of the General Assembly and decided to recommend that the discussion on this agenda item should continue during the forty-ninth session of the Assembly, building on the work done in the course of the forty-eighth session. To that end, the Open-ended Working Group recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

> The General Assembly, having considered the report on the progress of the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council established pursuant to resolution 48/26 of 3 December 1993: 1/
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> (a) Takes note of the work of the Open-ended Working Group;
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> (b) Decides that the Open-ended Working Group should continue its work, taking into account, inter alia, the views expressed at the forty-ninth session, and submit a report to the General Assembly before the end of that session.

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 47 (A/48/47).